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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

IN PROPHECY NO. 2.

IN the Prophetical writings to which we have already called attention, it is clear that, every prominent feature of the Spiritual temple is strikingly delineated in the Old Testament. These sacred records, are so rich in instruction, and illustration that, it would be impossible to present a life like picture of the Divine edifice without their use. They are indeed, so valuable, that, it is difficult to pass unnoticed the slightest reference to the Messiah. God seems to have said just enough in the Old Testament to illustrate his kingdom under the New Testament, and yet, we find no superfluous word or allusion.

We will notice a few more of the very striking *visions* of Isaiah. We have already quoted from David, the statement that, "The stone which the builders refused, has become the head of the corner." "This is the Lord's doings, and is marvelous in our eyes."

FOURTH VISION OF ISAIAH.

"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation, he that believeth, shall not make haste." Is. 28, 16. Upon the faith of this Precious and Tried corner stone, the

church was to be built. Paul assures us that, "This Rock was Christ." 1 Cor. 3, 11, and while we rejoice in such a Savior, we can have but little religious sympathy, with Romanists who teach that, the church rests upon Peter as the rock. Years since, we put the question to a distinguished priest, "Have you no misgivings as to the rock being a mere man"? His reply was, "I suffer not myself to think upon a matter, the church has settled." This conduct, excludes religious thought, the exercise and benefit of an honest judgment, the personal belief which saves and in fact, all the consolation to which christians are entitled, through the exercise of a living faith in the Messiah. God promised that he would lay in Zion, the Rock, and to christians, from generation to generation, this is the precious Rock, the sure corner, in whose shadow, all the saints, sit and sing together, in hope of immortality.

FIFTH VISION OF ISAIAH.

"Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." "A man, shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isaiah 32, 1, 2. This is the lowly king, whom Hosea, (9, 9) saw entering Jerusalem in triumph with the "princes to rule in judgment." With this vision, we place, the prediction, "Behold your God will come, with a recompense. Then, the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an heart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. For in the wilderness, shall the waters break out, and streams in the desert. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those—the wayfaring man; though fools shall not err therein." No Lion shall be there, and no ravenous beast shall go up thereon, but the redeemed, "shall walk there." The ransomed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35; 6, 10. Every vision, and almost every feature of each vision, comes to us as new, and yet, as of vast importance, in enabling us to comprehend the greatness, the excellency and the glory of the kingdom of the beloved Savior. The highway, is free to all, and yet the pure alone were to

walk in it; and we have great reason to rejoice in the knowledge that, it was to be so plain that, even fools, need not err therein. All the sincere in heart, who seek the truth find it.

SIXTH VISION OF ISAIAH.

"Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax, shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law." Isaiah 42; 1, 4. In this prophecy, the Savior not only gives his own character, but the character of his kingdom, is strikingly set forth. The Spirit of God, was to direct his steps; his voice was not to be heard on the housetops, to give success to his teaching, a bruised reed was not to be used, or the dimly smoking flax extinguished, to make his laws victorious The Lord was to conquer by love alone. Peaceable agencies, were to move the nations. To this day, no other means have been employed by the saints. The isles received his laws, at the hands of the Apostles. In the close of the vision, it is said, "I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast, of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." Isaiah 43, 19-23. In every line, we plainly see spiritual principles, which far transcend in wisdom and goodness, all earthly developments.

SEVENTH VISION OF ISAIAH.

Seven hundred and twelve years before the birth of Christ, the Lord said, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, I hid not my face from shame, and spitting." Isaiah 50, 6. Matthew, 745 years after the prediction wrote, "Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands. Mat. 26, 67. It seems to us impossible, for candid minds to resist the conclusion that, Isaiah was a Prophet of God, and that Jesus was more than

a mere man. In each statement, there is evidence of truth and of supernatural power. The patient, self-denial of Christ—is contrary to the course of men. Only a few have attained to that eminence in the divine life, which enables them to bear the cross patiently.

It is said again, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment; for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken. He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." "He bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities—the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes, we are healed." Isaiah 53; 3, 9. In these brief quotations, we find the cost of our redemption, and gain such information regarding the Savior, as should enable us fully to appreciate the character, not only of our Lord, but also the qualities which we, as his followers, must possess in order to gain life.

In view of the triumphs of the Lord's gracious plan for the salvation of men, the Prophet exclaimed, "How beautiful upon the mountains. are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. Thy watchman shall lift up the voice; with the voice together, shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Then pointing to Christ, he added, "Break forth into joy; sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, the Lord hath made bare his holy arm, in the eyes of all nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God." Isaiah 52, 2, 10. Have not all these things been fulfilled?

The Apostles of Christ, "Brought glad tidings of good things," and from the first century of our era to this day, no one has "brought a single additional word of glad tidings," and hence all who have assumed to be ambassadors for Christ, have imposed upon themselves and all who have heard them. From the day in which the truth was revealed, in believing through the words of

the Apostles, christians could but walk in the same faith; see eye to eye, and speak the same things. In dreams, opinions and spiritual whims, men honestly differ, for want of a basis of belief; but the faith of all christians is one. It is vain to pray, "May thy people be one." The Lord has but one people—one body, and one spirit to animate the one body. The Lord has made bare his holy arm, to all the nations, and even in the days of Paul, "The Gospel was preached to every creature under heaven." Col. 1, 23. We cannot look to the future for a greater development of divine wisdom. It is not needed, and every false and pretentious intimation touching the necessity—probability, or possibility of additional light only tends to weaken confidence in the revelations that God has employed in controling our race for almost six thousand years. The bare possession of greater discoveries through impulses, reason, falsely so called, spirit manifestation, or otherwise, is *prima facie* evidence, of infidelity in the pretender. All things that pertain to life and godliness, we have, and there does not exist a want for more.

EIGHTH VISION OF ISAIAH.

The concluding vision of the Prophet, is so life like and perfect, that one unacquainted with the Scriptures, might conclude he had been a member of the Jerusalem congregatian of disciples, and when he wrote, he had all the facts fresh in his mind. In the first place he calls attention to the King and Head of the church, in the following impressive manner. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening the prison to the bound. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning; the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness: that they might be called the Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord." Isaiah 61; 1, 3. These words sound very much like the utterances of the Savior at Capernium, or at Jerusalem. The Prophet calls special attention to the people of the Lord under the administration of the Prince, their organization, privileges and honors; but represents the Savior, as saying, "For Zion sake will

I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof, as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah, for the Lord delighteth in thee, and the land shall be married." Isaiah 62; 1-4. Again, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this that, is glorious in apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength"? The response is, "I have trodden the wine press alone. I looked, and there was none to help, therefore, mine own arm brought salvation." Isaiah 63; 1 6.

But last of all, the Prophet says to the Jews, "Your iniquities, and the iniquities of the fathers, who have burned incense on the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills, will I remember, but I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains, and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And ye shall leave your name, for a curse unto my chosen. for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name. That he who blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the God of truth." Isaiah 65; 8, 16. It will be carefully noted that, when, "The Gentiles should see the righteousness of Zion, and the kings of the earth, her glory," the Lord would "Call his servants by a new name." This new name, was to imply that, the Lord delighted in his people, and the land, Beulah, signified married. The fulfillment, at the house of Cornelius, was complete in every particular. When the Gentiles were called, "Paul and Barnabus named the disciples Christians, first in Antioch." Ac. 11, 20. God's "elect" alone were to be honored, when the Lord God "called his servants by another name." The called and chosen now honor their Savior in bearing "the name Christ." 1 Peter 4, 16. They are simply Christians. While it is necessary to notice a few visions of other Prophets, it is with reluctance we bid adieu to Isaiah.

FIRST VISION OF JEREMIAH.

In the sixth hundred and sixth year before Christ, the following prophecy was recorded: "Behold, the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel,

and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that, I made with their fathers, in the day I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. But this shall be the covenant, I will make with the house of Israel, after those days; I wiil put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more, every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them, to the greatest of them, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more." Jer. 31; 31-34. It will be remembered that the Lord promised a new order of things, not like the old. In the new way, his laws were to be written on the hearts of his people. They were to be inscribed upon their hearts and written upon their minds, by the teaching of the Good Spirit. Hence, the Savior said, "They shall all be taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh to me." John 6, 45. In this manner, all are "drawn" to the Father; and it may be safely affirmed, that such as have not heard, and learned the truth, have not the law written in their hearts, and come not to the Father. The commission was, "Go teach the nations."

All were to know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, and all were to be teachers, In the kingdom of Messiah, the members are alive through the truth, through words spoken, and no one needs instruction beyond the things found in the Sacred Oracles. Such as have understandingly, believed in Christ, and given their hearts to the Savior, God remembers their sins against them no more. Consequently, it is clear, the plan of redemption through Christ is new; and yet so plain, that all may obey in confidence, and have the strongest assurance of acceptance, before the Father.

SECOND VISION OF JEREMIAH.

The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, "If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night in their season; then may also, my covenant be broken wlth David, my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne." Jer. 33; 18-26. Christ is represented as the son of David, and the Son of God, ordained to rebuild "The Tabernacle of

David, which had fallen down," and to reign over "spiritual Israel forever." The main point in the vision, is the evidence that, our Savior, as the Son of David, fulfilled the prediction of Nathan, 2 Sam. 7, 13, quoted by Jeremiah, and mentioned by James; Ac. 15, 16. The foregoing are the chief visions of Jeremiah.

THE VISION OF EZEKIEL.

At a still later date, Ezekiel, was enabled to see the Jews restored in a manner, which indicates spiritual life. We are, at least, inclined to the conclusion that, the blessings promised in the following quotation, had reference to the reign of Christ. "I will sanctify my great name, O house of Israel, which is profaned among heathen; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall be sanctified in you, before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land, "Then will I sprinkle clean water uponyou,and you shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: I will take away the stony heart ont of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments." Ez. 36; 27 27. While, we may not be able to answer satisfactorily, all the questions which might be propounded touching these highly metaphorical statements, we can but apply the predictions to the blessings of the Messiah's reign. All Israel in the goodly land, had the offer of life, and such as received the truth, were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, became heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, we look for no new order of religious servicce, for the special benefit of Israel, "David was to be Prince over the servants of God forever." Ez. 37, 25. There is no place for any other organization, save the church.

FIRST VISION OF DANIEL.

If we could consider any vision of the Prophets more important than all others, it would be the first recorded by Daniel. Its history is brief, but most essential for the full effect.

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Egypt 603 years before Christ, had a

distressing dream, which his wise men, could neither repeat to the king, nor interpret. In consequence of their failure, the king ordered his wise men to be slain. Application was made to Daniel, the prophet of God, who was at the time a prisoner in Egypt. The secret was revealed to Daniel, and when brought before the king, he said, "There is a God in heaven, that revealeth secrets, and maketh known what shall be in the latter days." "The dream and the visions of thy head, upon thy bed, are these," said Daniel. "Thou, O, king sawest a great image. The head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet, part of iron and part of clay. "Thou sawest, till that a stone was cut out, without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold, broken to pieces, and become like the chaff of the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them, and the stone that smote the image, became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." "This was the dream, and we will tell the interpretation of it, before the king. Thou, O king, art this head of gold; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, strength and glory. But after thee, shall arise another kingdom, inferior to thee; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom. shall be strong as iron: but as the toes and feet, were part of iron and part of clay, the kingdom shall be divided, and partly strong and partly broken. And whereas, thou sawest the iron mixed with the miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings, the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2; 51-44.

In this brief account we have forcibly presented the history of the world from the days of Daniel to the end of time. All who are acquainted with history, are aware that, four universal monarchies or governments have existed on earth.

1. The Babylonian monarchy, existed in full force and power throughout the world, when the children of Israel, were carried into captivity to Babylon. The last king was Belshazzar, who about 538 B. C. in one of his idolatrous feasts saw, "fingers of a

man's hand, write upon the plaster of his palace. the words, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN, which, interpreted by the prophet, reads, MENE, God hath numbered thy kingdom; and finished it. TEKEL, thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting. PERES, thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes vnd Persians.

Daniel says, "In that night, was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans slain; and Darius, the Median took the kingdom. Dan. 5, 30. The Medo-Persian kingdom, continued till it fell under Alexander the great, who established the Macedonian or Grecian empire; and last of all, the Roman empire arose to take the place of Greece and all former powers. It was in the days of this last great empire, that was part clay, and part iron—part strong and part weak, that, the "God of heaven reared a kingdom." It will be remembered, that our Savior was born under the reign of Augustus Cæsar, and was put to death under the reign of Tiberias Cæsar. History informs us that, it was under Tiberias, the church was planted at Jerusalem. We invite special attention to a few of the items recorded by the prophet, regarding this kingdom of the God of heaven.

1. It should be borne in mind that, God was to set up a kingdom, not remodel one, or improve some old institution. It was to be a new organization.

2. It was not to be destroyed. It has lasted eighteen hundred years, in the midst of the severest opposition. We think, there is no ground to fear.

3. It has not been left to other paople. No people save christians appreciate the new institution, and what seems, most remarkable is, the very general opposition to the christian religion.

4. It is to break into pieces and consume all other kingdoms. There is not a remaining doubt that, the christian institution is unlike all other governments, and from this fact, we ought to see the ground of opposition. Contrary to the operations of other institutions, the christian temple, was reared without violence, the stone came from the mountain, without hands, and the temple which adumbrated the christian edifice, was reared without the use of a hammer, or iron instrument, and the church rose in grandeur, "without observation," and now stands forth as the greatest power on earth, without a soldier or single hand to support it. God upholds his building, and we have no occasion to fear its overthrow.

5. In the last place, it is said, "It shall stand forever." We have, at least, no reason to doubt the truth of the promise. Other kingdoms may fall, but the christian church, must live on to bless the nations of the earth.

THE SECOND VISION OF DANIEL.

In the first year of Belshazzar's reign Daniel "saw a vision, four great beasts come up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first, was like a lion, the second was like a bear; the third was like a leopard; and the fourth beast was dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and had great iron teeth, and it had ten horns; I considered the horns, he said, and there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots, and in this horn, there were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things." "I saw one like the Son of man, come with the clouds of heaven, and there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7, 1-14.

The following seems to be the correct interpretation of this remarkable vision. The four beasts, that rose out of the sea, were four kingdoms—the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman. The ten horns, on the fourth beast, that was more powerful, than the others, were, and are, the ten governments of Europe, into which the Roman empire has been divided. The little horn, which came up last, and plucked up three of the other horns, is the Pope of Rome, that had a mouth speaking great things. The little horn was also to "speak great words, against the most High, and to wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, and they (the kingdoms,) were to be given into his hand, until a time and times, and the dividing of times." "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion and consume and destroy it unto the end." "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. 6; 23-27.

For fifteen hundred years, the Pope has blasphemed against the Most High;—has not only thought to change laws and times, but has induced Protestants to follow his pernicious example. They

tell us, the church has the right to change forms aud enact laws. Although, by craft, was the little horn to prosper. and was to destroy many and stand up against the Prince of Princes, he was to be broken without hand." His power is now well nigh broken, and his influence, and the influence of his co-workers, will not again be regarded as heretofore. There is every prospect, the people of the saints of the Most High, under the guidance of the Prince of Peace, are to exert an influence, not witnessed in the ages that have past. Volumes of a most profitable character, might be written upon the visions of Daniel, but we can only take a bird's eye view of them, in passing to subjects more recent, and possibly, more practical. It is, however, through the prophecies, we can best see the spiritual edifice under the Messiah, which we are anxious to portray.

THE VISION OF JOEL.

"I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters, shall prophecy; your old men shall dream dreams; and your young men shall see visions; And also, upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days, will I pour out my spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass that, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered." Joel 2; 28-32. In Peter's first discourse, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, he rehearsed this whole prophecy, and applied it to the concurrences of Pentecost, and those which had preceded this great and terrible day of the Lord." Ac. 2; 16-21. Hence, no exposition which may be attempted, can make the matters recorded, plainer, or even add interest to any single statement.

THE VISION OF AMOS.

"In that day, will I raise up the tabernacle that has fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old." Amos 9, 11.

We are aware that, many learned men, and excellent christians, for whom we have great respect, think that this vision, has refer-

ence to an era still in the future, which differs widely from the Christian. We however, entertain no such a view, and while we may not be able to answer the seeming contradictions that may be presented, we respectfully suggest, that in our view, the temporal blessings which the posterity of Abraham enjoyed in the land of Canaan, will not be restored. Secondly, we are of the judgment, all that Amos saw, has been, or will be fulfilled, in the kingdom of the Redeemer. We can see nothing higher than the church, this side of hesven.

MICAH'S VISION.

"But in the last days, it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord, shall be established in the top of the mountains; and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations, shall say, come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths, for the law shall go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Mi. 4, 2.

This vision is identical with the first of Isaiah; but it may be well, to still call further attention to the law that was to go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord, that was to be sounded out from Jerusalem. It is certainly most clear, that the achievements of the first Pentecost after the resurrection of the Savior, constitute, the beginning of the christian dispensation. This day is really the foundation of the new world. Perhaps, it would not be wise to close the subject of Micah's vision, without adding his prediction regarding the birth of Messiah. "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, out of thee, shall come forth to me, one to rule the nations; whose goings forth have been from old, and from everlasting." Mi. 5, 2. In a small village of Judah, was born the ruler of the world. He was brought forth in a stable and cradled in an oxen's manger.

THE VISION OF ZECHERIAH.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." "His dominion shall be from sea, even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." Zech, 9; 9, 10.

We can see no good reason, why this very plain and cheering prophecy, should not be literally fulfilled. A part of it, was fulfilled when the Savior entered Jerusalem in triumph, and we think that, we should not doubt the universal reign of our Lord on the earth. The Prophet concludes, "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day, there shall be one Lord, and his name one." Zech. 14, 9. At this day, there is but one Lord, and his name is but one. The saints of God. should rejoice in the one precious name, the new name that, was to be given, and the only name for which they can suffer.

THE VISION OF MALACHI.

"Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven, and the proud and wicked, shall be stubble; but unto you that fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall, and ye shall tread down the wicked. I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers." Mal. 4th ch.

Thus, closes the predictions of the Old Testament.

THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS.

THERE, perhaps, is no instance of conversion reported in the Sacred Scriptures, in reference to which teachers of religion, differ as widely as that, of the first Gentile christians. The chief cause of the differences, is easily ascertained. Men of the different denominations, view the matter, from stand points, so different that, it is impossible for them to see the subject, in the same light. Again, it is possible, most men, entertain peculiar views, and when this is the case, it is quite difficult for them to agree. Teachers generally, entertain traditionery notions, regarding the conversion of Cornelius and other subjects, containing little or no truth, and through these, they are led into confusion. Very few, have carefully studied the matter, with the view of learning what the Scriptures really teach on the subject.

In our remarks upon "The work of the Holy Spirit," in the 12th No. of the Religious Historian, on page 362, we find the words, "Cornelius, before faith—before, in fact,—he had heard the words of his salvation, before repentance, and before his submission to Christ, was the subject of the Spirits miraculous influences."

Our highly respected Bro. Dr. B. W. Lauderdale, of Bailey, Tenn., asks,

1. How do you reconcile this view, with the words of Jesus, "Whom the world cannot receive."

2. How do you reconcile it with the words, "Thus spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive?" Jno. 7, 39. He adds, "Peter's entire discourse, containing the facts of the Gospel, with the promise of remission of sins, through the name of Jesus, to the believer, was before the Holy Spirit fell on them. How could they help believing Peter's words? and how could these words fail to produce repentance? After the Holy Spirit fell on them, without further teaching, Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." "I cannot see that the Spirit fell on Cornelius before faith and repenatnce." "If it is true, will you help me to see it."

We can but regret that, Bro. Lauderdale did not take more positive ground. The denominations—we mean Protestants, declare, that Cornelius was regenerated by the spirit, before his baptism in the name of Christ. The Baptists regard this as a clear and full example, of pardon, or remission of sins, and the gift of the Spirit of adoption anterior, to obedience. They declare that, upon the condition of faith only—in the words of Mr. Wesley—the Gentiles were justified, pardoned, saved, and sealed with the Holy Spirit. Hence, when they sit in judgment on a saving experience, they expect their converts, to say that, they, feel their sins are pardoned, and with Cornelius, the Spirit fell upon them. Most of the converts, tell how and when, the Spirit came from above to give them the revelation, their names were written above.

In treating of the subject, we respectfully call attention to the vision taken in the very popular work of Dr. R. Richardson, on

"THE OFFICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT."

The distinguishing feature of the book, is the doctrine of "The

unity that exists with God and his people, through the Spirit." This unity, is supposed, by the writer, to be the result of the reception of the Spirit. He argues that the Spiritual unity existed in the case of Cornelius, anterior to, "obeying from the heart that form of doctrine," in the obedience of which, aliens are ordinarily made free from sin and become the servants of righteousness." Ro. 6; 17, 18. On page 116, the author says, "It was the simple fact, of the impartation to the Gentiles, of the Holy Spirt, by which unity was to be established, in the body of Christ. The fact, undoubtedly shows that, God did not formerly forbear to give his Holy Spirit, to those whose hearts were purified by faith, even without baptism, and that, a want of faith, therefore, is the only insuperable obstacle to the reception of the Spirit. It is then a just conclusion that, he does not now withhold this precious gift from any true believer, even though he may, from ignorance of his duty, have remained unbaptized, in this age of religious error and confusion. This is a corollary, indeed, which necessarily follows from the concession that God has a people scattered among all religious parties." We presume, the statements of the book, require no explanation. All can understand the words, and conclusions. In sentiment, the writer, seems not to differ essentially from the Protestant denominations, and we suppose, the teachers of most of these respective sects, would heartily endorse the views as altogether sound. We would be sorry to think however that, the doctrine inculcated, is entertained generally, by the people known as disciples of Christ. We have not before noticed a writer amongst us, who maintains that, "a want of faith is the only insuperable obstacle to the reception of the Spirit."

We respectfully suggest to Bro. Lauderdale that, his mode of proceeding, is certainly not well calculated, to lead inquirers to satisfactory conclusions. When a proposition is submitted, the question, should be, "Is it true?" Not, how can we reconcile it with some other statement, or whither will it lead? If a position is true, we should adhere to it, without fear, and take the consequences. No truth, ever contradicts another truth. What God clearly reveals in one place, is contradicted in no other place. When we read, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," we should not be required to reconcile it with the supposed remission of Cornelius, before obedience. If faith is the only essential as Doctor R. thinks,

of "the unifying influence of the Holy Spirit," the teaching of the brethren for the last forty years has been a fatal mistake, and it is high time, they were confessing their shameful ignorance, if guilty, as charged. Let us glance at the statements, which we made in reference to Cornelius. We said that "Cornelius was the subject of miraculous influence, before faith, repentance, or submission."

Are these things true? We taught that, Cornelius had such knowledge of spiritual matters, as the law could impart. He talked with an angel; who directed him to send for Peter, to tell him, "What he must do." He was to "Tell him words, by which, he and all his house should be saved." Ac. 11, x5. Had he been told what to do? or had he heard the words of his salvation, when the Spirit fell on the assembly? The Apostle said, "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit, fell on the hearers." While we doubt not, Cornelius had the faith in the God of Israel, which disposed him to lead a devout life, and we have as little hesitation, he had heard part of the discourse spoken by Peter, all of which, according to his understanding, he believed, but when the Holy Spirit came upon him, he had not been told what to do, or heard the words by which he was to be saved; and, therefore, in ignorance, still of the obedience of the Gospel, he was not in the full Scriptural sense a believer. He had heard, but in part.

As quoted by Bro. L. "To him, give all the prophets witness that, through his name, (not through faith,) whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Ac. 10, 43. How are sinners saved, through, the name of Christ? The answer to this question, will remove all mists, clouds, and darkness from the minds of our contemporaries, as to the power that, saves the soul. In the name of Jehovah, alone, was the power, in the former dispensation, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, is all the power of our salvation. "There is no other name given under heaven, whereby we can be saved." Had the name of Christ, been employed, in any way, when the Spirit fell on Cornelius? The first requirement was, to be baptized, "in the name,"—by the authority of Christ. Peter was to tell him, "what to do." He commanded him to be baptized "in the name of the Lord." Peter says, salvation was through the name. If he understood himself, Cornelius was saved by submitting to God, through the name of Christ. Not, by the baptism of the Spirit. When the Lord said, "Whom the world cannot receive," or "the world can-

not receive the Spirit of God." (Jno. 14, 17,) we doubt not, he intended to convey the idea that, the new teacher—the advocate, was to be sent to the disciples, and not to the wicked. God's Spirit, however, in a miraculous manner, came upon Balaam, upon the soldiers of Saul, and upon Saul, but not to convert, or save them, but for the sake of others.

No miraculous development of the Spirit, under the Jewish or Christian dispensation, was to convert, pardon, regenerate, save a sinner, or to "Establish unity with Christ," but so far as we have been able to examine, no miraculous display of the Spirit, was intended to personally benefit, the subject of it, or did, in the least, morally profit the recipients. Peter and the other disciples, were not personally improved by the Spirit on Pentecost, but the world has been greatly blessed by the light shed forth through the Galllean fishermen. Jesus Christ recognized them as pardoned, and had called them to be Apostles. The Samaritans, "Believed and were baptized," from hearing and believing the Gospel of their salvation, and afterwards, they received the "Holy Spirit," through whose influence, "many miracles were done, and there was great joy in that city." Ac. 8; 6, 8. The miracle of the Spirit's falling upon Cornelius, was not to give faith, not to remit sins, not to benefit him, so far as we can see in the least, but it was specifically intended to convince the six witnesses with Peter, the church at Jerusalem, and unbelievers every where, that "In every nation, whosoever believes in Christ, and works righteousness, is accepted of him." Neither is the favorite "*unifying*" idea of Doctor Richardson, in our judgment sound. It is not to make sons, the Spirit is given; but Paul says, "Because you are sons,"because you are united to Christ—"God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father." Gal. 4, 6. Faith, which leads not to obedience, saves no one. "Faith without works is dead."

We might possibly, derive advantage from examining other miraculous displays of the Spirit, but we have certainly, seen that, miracles were never intended to directly convert, save, or unite any one to Christ; but the purpose, always was to convince the unbeliever, in regard to saving truth.

It would be proper to suggest that, we know not the people, who have admitted as Doctor Richardson, intimates, "That God has a people scattered among all religious parties." It has been

admitted amongst the disciples that, many of God's people are in great confusion; but, we have not higherto seen or heard of an intelligent teacher of the Christian religion, who presumed any one a christian, that had failed to believe with the heart unto righteousness, and made with the mouth, the confession unto salvation. Many religious sects, are too far from God, for us to conclude, their members, are in any sense, subjects of Christ's spiritual body. We regret to differ from Protestants, on so vital a question as the work of the Spirit, and we regret much more to differ from any called by the name of the Lord, but while we regard the Scriptures as perfect, we cannot close our eyes to the principles, submitted for our belief and government.

On the subject of Cornelius' conversion, Peter said, "Men and brethren, ye know that a good while ago, God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth, should hear the word of the Gospel and believe. And God, who knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Ac. 15; 7-10.

We have earnestly labored through life to satisfy our contemporaries that, there is one, and only one way, in which men can be saved. Not that, there was a way for the Jews, and another, which differs across the whole heavens, for the Gentiles. On Pentecost, the Jews who believed, were told to repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins." "God put no difference between," Jews and Gentiles; and if so, Cornelius was pardoned, and saved, when Peter told him, the words, he had "begun to speak," when the Holy Spirit fell on his people—when he told him, "what to do,"—when he, "commanded him, to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." His heart was "purified" by faith, furnished in the words spoken by Peter, and when he yielded his life, to the faith, he entered Christs spiritual body. Previously, he belonged to the world, although he was the subject of miraculous influence, "For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God." Well, they might have magnified God, in witnessing his love and in sending the man with the keys to open the door of salvation to them. Still, miracles never cure one of sin, and miraculous influences, in no instance, have changed, we repeat, the moral condition of a soul. Cornelius believed when he heard; "God granted him repentance into (in order to)

life." Ac. 11, 18, and of course, possessed it not previously; and he entered the body of the Savior, by baptism in his name. If these things are not true, we must begin our religious studies again. Still, we will be pleased to hear such objections as may be supposed to exist. Whenever the notion of Cornelius' salvation and spiritual "unification," with God and his Son, by a miracle of the Holy Spirit, before his obedience in the name of Christ, is shown to be true, we will frankly confess our inability to see, or tell, what God has revealed to dying sinners in order to the salvation of the soul, or eternal life beyond the grave. We are heartily sorry, to learn that strange theories are likely still to trouble us. If Cornelius is proved a Christian, by the miracle, when he and his friends, "spoke with tongues and magnified God," and we are to regard such a miracle as evidence of conversion in this day and a pattern for others, then, we can but conclude that, for eighteen hundred years, no man has been converted to Christ. No one has been favored by such a falling of the Holy Spirit, as to enable him to "speak with tongues." No one then, has a right to refer to Cornelius, to prove a conversion of modern date. The Gospel is the power of God, in order to salvation to believers. Ro. 1, 16.

DISCUSSION

At Flat Creek Village, Bedford Co., Tenn., between Dr. T. W. Brents, of the Church of Christ, and Jacob Ditzler, D. D., of the Methodist Church, from January 20th to 28th, 1873.

SUBJECTS.

1. *Baptism to penitent believers, is for the remission of past sins.*
Dr. Brents, affirms.

2. *Sprinkling or Pouring, is Scriptural Baptism.*
Mr. Ditzler, affirms.

TEACHERS of religion, generally consider it their privilege and duty, to expose the doctrines of all sects except their own; and yet, there are comparatively few, who are favorable to public discussions. While debates are regarded as mere *wrangles*, they can but be offensive. In the New Testament, the Greek word, *eris*, occurs 9 times; and is rendered, 4 times *strife; 2 contention;* 1 *variance;* and 2 *debates.* Paul places the words, *debates, envy, murder, deceit* and *malignity*, in the same class. Ro. 1, 29. Sol-

omon, however, uses the word with quite a different signification. He says, "Debate, thy cause with thy neighbor." Prov. 25, 9, which is equivalent to saying, "Explain to thy neighbor his faults, and expose him not to others." With this view, good men ought to favor manly discussion of all the real, or imaginary differences in the churches.

We apprehend, notwithstanding the opposition to public discussions that the *manner* of procedure, in the disputants, causes most of the objectionable features. Paul reasoned, or debated with Felix, till he trembled and said, "Go thy way Paul, when I have a more convenient season I will call for thee." He also, debated in so impressive a manner with king Agrippa, as to cause him to exclaim, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a christian," With reference to the propriety of public discussions, we give it as our judgment, that, when they are conducted in a spirit of strife, they are productive of incalculable evil; but the examination of difficulties, amongst gentlemen and christians, results in mutual benefit to all concerned. By the request of our esteemed Brother, T. W. Brents, we attended the recent discussion, in the capacity of moderator, and being satisfied we could not give a full report, without the publication of a volume of considerable size, we think we may profit our readers, by presenting a few of the most important points examined.

In regard to the debatants, it will be in place, to offer a few respectful suggestions. Dr. T. W. Brents, is about fifty years old, of good personal appearance, and is possessed of more than ordinary intellectual powers. His early education was not regular, and while he is still deficient in classical learning, by a life of devotion to the study of the Sacred Oracles, he is quite familiar with the teachings of the Spirit. In all matters of doubtful tendency, he proceeded cautiously, but in the examinations of Scripture, he evinced great powers of mind, and a candor which was generally appreciated by the audience.

Mr. Ditzler, is between forty and fifty years old, of rather slender frame, and is possibly by birth and education, a Kentuckian. His Phrenological developments, evince fine powers in language, but there is no evidence, of what the world would regard very great powers of mind. The manner in which he employs the English language, however, unmistakably evinces that, his early education was deficient; and yet, his familiarity with various points of criticism, and his readiness in the use of foreign words

and phrases, denotes that he has devoted himself to the examination of such speculations, as enable him to present his peculiar notions to considerable advantage. We can scarcely call to mind his equal in *repartee*, and such *cutting remarks*, as weigh with the masses of partisans.

The general bearing of both the disputants, however, was courteous, and we have good reason to believe the discussion will lead many candid persons,i nto profitable channels of thought.

Dr. Brents maintained that, "sin is the transgression of law," that God has ordained faith, as a condition of a change of mind and heart, repentance, in order to a change of life; and the confession of the authority of Christ, and baptism into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in order to the remission of sins, —in order to adoption into the spiritual family, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Mr. Ditzler maintained that, "faith alone," is the condition of remission. His main Scriptures were, "he that believeth hath everlasting life," and "*only believe*," and thy daughter shall live. Neither passage has any reference to the subject of remission.

On the action of Baptism, Mr. Ditzler, affirmed that *Baptizoo*, in classic Greek, means to *dip*, *plunge*, or *immerse*, but in Hellenistic, or New Testament Greek, the word, does not necessarily, denote to *dip*, or to be *buried*, but, the ordinance, may be performed by *sprinkling* or *pouring*, as well as by immersing the believer.

Dr. Brents, gave as the *root*, and *branch* meaning of the word to *dip* or *immerse*, and called to his aid, the Lexicons; critics, the fathers, and the learned in the Romish and Protestant churches. Secondly, he showed that, the sole ground of substitutiug any other action, originated from the assumed right to change the *forms* of God's ordinances. This was substantiated by the Bible, and by the highest authority of Romanism and Protestantism. He maintained that our Savior commanded *immersion*, which could not be performed by sprinkling. In conclusion, the argument drawn from the metaphorical application of the word, as "*Buried in Baptism*," seemed to put the action beyond all controversy.

We give it as our judgment, that thoughtful persons who listentened to the discussion, can scarcely fail to examine the Scriptures more earnestly for themselves, with reference to the matters pre-

sented. We returned to our post; with a greatly increased desire to encourage our teachers of religion to become much more earnest students of the Bible, and much profounder critics, in all questions involving our future destiny.

Before dismissing the subject of religious discussion, we wish to intimate, the existence of a very general desire amongst the disciples, that there should be held at some favorable point in Tennessee, say Nashville, Murfreesboro, Franklin or Columbia, in as favorable circumstances as possible, if practicable, an exhaustive discussion of the subject of remission of sins. Romanists and Episcopalians; still maintain the authority of baptismal regeneration for the remission of original sin; Lutherans, Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists, unite in proclaiming faith alone, before obedience for remission; while the Bible teaches that, no one, without "obeying from the heart, that form of doctrine revealed, can be assured that he is free from sin."

What say our friends of the denominations? Will our Methodist brethren, endorse and call Mr. Ditzler, or any other defender of their doctrine to the work? We wish to meet a man of authority, and if our suggestion should meet with favor, we will select one from our ranks, who shall, at least, be a fair representative.

Such a discussion, conducted in the fear of God, we confidently believe, would be the means of accomplishing great good in our age.

THE EDUCATION OF PREACHERS.

We desire, as soon as we can find space to offer such views upon the subject of "Ministerial Education," as we may regard appropriate, but at present, we will present but two respectful suggestions.

In the first place, the idea of young men spending several years in our Colleges,—Bible Schools, merely for purposes of preparing to talk to the public, or to make sermons, we consider as a shameful waste of time and opportunity to become useful.

Secondly, we have not yet seen amongst the brethren, such schools and preparations for giving instruction, as seem requisite to make sound scholars and eminent Biblical critics. We would be pleased to have questions, legitimately arising from the true character of ministerial education, thoroughly discussed amongst

us. We offer no opposition to any efforts making in this direction amongst the preachers, but would willingly co-operate as we have long done, with the brethren in so valuable a service. We need more profound scholars and sound thinkers.

IMPROVE THE PRESENT.

YOUNG persons find this difficult. They generally study more how to enjoy the passing hour, than the best manner of improving it. We meet but few who place a proper estimate on the present.

They love to think of the past—love, in fancy to wander over the scenes that have been to them, bright and joyous. Indeed, it is the case with those more advanced in years. They turn with pleasure to the home and friends of youthful days. Loved forms rise up and pass before the glass of memory. Gentle words and loving glances, that made earth an Eden, are remembered, and the heart is filled with tender thought. The young look eagerly into the future. Many bright spots are descried. Vistas of beauty stretch out in the distance, and Hope the animating spirit, fills all with life and happiness. Yes, the past and future are to the young, realms of memory and hope, but strange to tell, the present, on which both depend, is less valued, is of less importance in their estimation. To some, it is even a burden, unless they are engaged in the pursuit of pleasure—in the gay dance—in the halls of mirth and feasting. When there is no excitement, the object is often, to kill time, forgetting, that life and death hang upon the present moment, and should it be taken from them, they would enter a world, where the happiness or misery of untold ages, will depend upon a well spent past. The present has been compared to grains of golden sand, that are constantly slipping from our grasp. We cannot hold them, and we do not know when one has gone to Eternity, that another will be given. If it could be remembered, that these fleeting portions of time are worth more to us than the whole universe—are given to be rationally enjoyed—given to prepare us for the duties of life, and for that world we must enter, when the angel ceases to measure out these golden sands, and declares, that time, to us, shall be no longer. May I say to my young sisters, the present is more valuable to you, than the past

and the future. You cannot recall a moment—cannot undo a wrong action, cannot unsay an unkind word, but, if you can, in your past lives, remember such words and actions—if you can remember, "I have not been gentle and obedient to my mother—I have not paid to my father the respect and reverence becoming a child, I have not set to my young brothers and sisters an example I wish them to follow—the present hour is the time to consider." How can I so change my conduct, that in future, no sad memories will fill my heart? I wish to feel, should I live to see my mother laid to rest, that I have been a comfort to her—have relieved her from many cares—have added to her enjoyment.

You can so much improve the present, that your father may look upon you with pride, and your brothers and sisters, by following your example, may grow up noble men and women. You can lay up treasures to enjoy through eternal ages. The present moment is the only one you can claim. Let me again speak of its priceless value. Suppose you are on a small space a hundred feet high. The steps by which you have attained your position have all fallen away. You do not know that others will rise for you still to pass on, and you cannot return. Situated thus, would you not cling to that little place of safety! and would not the idea, of its giving way be very fearful to you? Suppose too, your friends and relations are around you. They need your help and comfort—but if you are selfish, you have enough to do to keep your own position, to attend to your own danger and difficulty. This is about our footing in the world. The past has fallen away from us. The present moment alone, keeps us from passing to that world, from whence no traveller ever returns to tell of its joys or sorrows. The present moment keeps those who know not God, from the solemn dwelling, "where their worm dies not," yet it is often wasted, and worse than wasted. Young christians should study this new year, how the present may be improved, as well as enjoyed. "Time is the warp of life, and we would gladly help the young, the gay, the fair, to weave it well."

C. F.

Brother Joseph Ash, of Canada, who visited us a few years since, not only encourages us in our work, but writes encouragly in regard to the cause in the Queens land. Bro. Ash, is an earnest and successful advocate of truth.

CHRISTIAN MOTHERS SHOULD BE EARNEST.

CHRISTIAN mothers should be most earnest in their profession. They believe they will be rewarded according to their works and know they exert an influence, for good or evil, every day. If eternity were ten thousand years in duration—if it were only a thousand years in passing, there would be no apology for the neglect of the duty, "to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." But they profess to believe the future world is endless, and of course, this obligation is the more imperative. They are leading with them, sons, daughters and other relatives, who follow their footsteps in time, and take their places in eternity according to character formed here. Mothers should walk very thoughtfully and consider their influence. How can they be gay and fashionable, when they look upon their children and reflect, "These are dependent on me—their happiness here and hereafter, is in my hands. I am forming their characters —am leading them to endless bliss or woe." How one can bear the reflection? I have not set a good example to the son who has just left me. I have given him good food, have clothed him well, but have not strengthened his character, by instilling pure principles. He yields to temptation and is less and less able to resist it. The boy she loves so well, is in the path that leads from goodness and from God, and it may be, she herself directed him to it, by faults in her own character. How can a christian mother think of a son, laid down to his long sleep and remember? "I never spoke to him of Jesus—never pointed him to the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." Good food and good clothes are very necessary, but besides these, if lessons of truth and purity are not constantly impressed on the minds of children, there will be cause of deep sadness in future. Wicked sons who wander in forbidden paths, daughters, gay and thoughtless, are often led to the Savior, by the memory of a mother's prayers and tears.

All who have the care of the young, should be truly earnest, but mothers, especially, should remember their responsibilities. Their own characters should be formed by the influence of the religion they profess, and but few children, if any, will depart from the way of truth and goodness, when led therein, by an earnest christian mother.

C. F.

CULTIVATION OF KIND FEELING.

UNLESS there is love among the members of a church, but little good influence is exercised upon others. It is sometimes the case, that difficulties arise, and instead of studying the Bible, and the character of Christ, the brothers and sisters study each other. They look for faults and find so many, they forget their own. Instead of this, if all would talk kindly together—find out the real cause of excitement—determine to bear and forbear—to be particularly cautious in the use of the tongue—the trouble would soon pass away. If they would thus act, the clouds of strife would disperse—the sun again smile on them, and all would be peace. There is unhappiness in many churches, for the want of this kind consideration among the members. I call to mind one that forgot the teaching of the Savior on this subject and suffered —deeply suffered for the neglect. There were between eighty and ninety persons who had heard the Gospel, obeyed it, and had given themselves to the Lord, and to one another. The opposition they met, made them humble and earnest. They learned to sing, pray, read the Scriptures and break the loaf. There were several sensible men, who conducted meetings in a manner pleasant to the greater part of the members. While they so lived, there was love and humility among them, but one of the sisters who wished to be like other people, suggested, they ought to have a preacher. Others came to the same conclusion, and a young, stylish looking man having presented himself, he was accepted by the majority of the church. The trouble began. Some disliked him and his preaching, and very soon, would not hear him. He proved to be altogether unsuitable and left. The unhappiness he produced was not so easily removed. Unkind feelings had arisen, and there was coolness between brothers and sisters, who had before cultivated christian love. Several preachers succeeded him, and seemed to have the influence, rather to divide, than unite the church. Things came to such a pass, that some of the sisters would not even speak when they met. Some of the brethren too, laid aside their christian dignity, and talked unkindly of each other. These things occurred many years ago, but the effect still remains

The Savior was wounded in the house of his friends, and his enemies rejoiced. The cause was injured. Persons without, laughed at men and women, who would tell, to them, their diffi-

culties with their brethren, and thought they might as well be out of the church, as in it. It will be years before the Christian religion will be respected in that vicinity, as it once was. It shows the importance of settling difficulties kindly—in the spirit of Him who was meek and lowly in heart. In some of the churches in our State, there are troubles, and if all the sisters would determine, "We will do what we can to settle them—we will give up unkind feeling, and perform our duty as christians," what a change would be seen. Sisters would meet as sisters, and forget the past, knowing there is so much for them to do, towards making the world better, instead of adding to its misery. The year eighteen hundred and seventy three would be happier to all, and more good would be done. The Savior prayed that his disciples might be one, that the world might see the beauty and purity of his religion. "By this, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

C. F.

COME TO CHRIST.

YES, come to Him, and let the Spirits of the dead alone. There is no other name given under heaven by which we may be saved—none other revealed in God's word. To him, every knee must bow, either in this world, or on the broad shore of eternal ruin. Do Spirits communicate new plans by which men are to be saved? or do they give the honor to Christ? Do they not lead sinners from him, and fill their minds with blasphemy against the Son of God by asserting, that he was a mere man, and not a divine being? What spirit has such claims upon human beings as He who poured out his life's blood for them? He calls all to come to Him and live, but instead of coming humbly to his feet—many are asking the spirits of the dead, for the knowledge that Christ alone has given. All feel an interest in the dead, but what can they do for us, or we for them? Abraham told the rich man, there was a "great gulf," between him and them, that none could pass. It is certain while the Savior was on earth, angels ministered to him, and wicked spirits trembled at his word. If all were under his control, why should we leave the law of the King, to enquire of his subjects, good or evil? If he permits

spirits to teach men, it is an admission they have not enough, "to make the man of God perfect and thoroughly furnished to all good works." If they come without his authority, we should reject their revelations, and those who teach them, knowing that, "If any man add to the words of the prophecy of this book, (the Bible,) God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in it. If any man shall take away from the words of the prophecy of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." If we believe the Bible, we will not tamper with things hidden, as did the witch of Endor, but will sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him. His words are spirit and they are life, filling the sad heart with comfort and with peace that passeth not away. No spirit has done for the frail beings of earth, what the Savior did. He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, was wounded for our transgressions, was oppressed and afflicted, and shall we hide our faces from Him, and turn to the spirits of dead men? Let us come into his presence, with hearts full of gratitude and love and "crown him Lord of all."

C. F.

WHY WILT THOU DIE BEFORE THY TIME?

SOLOMON asks this question, and many young persons might reply, "Because we are determined to be fashionable while we live." Parents are often called to mourn over the death of young daughters. They pray for resignation to the will of God, when he has said, men and women may live, "three score and ten years." It is often disobedience to his will that cuts the thread of life before it is spun out, as it may be. I was struck by the opinion of an old fashioned physician on the subject of early deaths. He thought nearly half the human race killed themselves, and if they studied and avoided what is injurious to them, and learned and practiced a healthful course, many who die early, might live out their appointed days, and—even a longer time. Numbers of young persons are frail and delicate, who might be fresh and blooming, if they took the same care to preserve their health, they do to destroy it. Let a girl who expects to die of consumption, put away her thin shoes during the cold weather. Let her clothing be perfectly comfortable—loose enough to enable her

to breathe freely—to fill her lungs with fresh air when she needs it, (every minute in the day)—take enough exercise to keep the house in order, and run about out of doors besides. Her feet should be dry and warm, her head cool. For farther improvement, when spring brightens the world, let her go out into the shade or sunshine, as the case may be, and exercise for two hours in the morning, with a light spade, rake or hoe. Her food should be plain, wholesome, and taken regularly. Instead of long naps in the day time, let her go and see a sick neighbor—help a weary friend, assist her mother, lessen the burdens of her father—in a word—do all she can to make others happy. By being thoughtful of friends, careful of herself, and useful generally, the roses of health will come back to her cheeks, and the spirit content dwell in her heart. The fresh morning air and exercise will bring strength of body and mind. She will learn to love every stem that buds—every flower that blooms. Fragrant blossoms will fill her heart with gratitude, and every bird song find an echo there. If she live thus, it will not be necessary to take morphine or other stimulants, now so common. Let her throw them all to the dogs, if she wishes to possess a clear mind, a heathful body, and live out comfortably, her three score years and ten.

C. F.

"On this Rock I will build my Church and the Gates of Hetl shall not prevail against it." We have been requested by our esteemed Brother R. B. Trimble, of Murry, Ky., to examine the above pnssage, with the view of defining clearly whether the Gates of Hell, were to prevail against the foundation, or the church. We are frank to say that, there are points in the scriptures, as Peter said to Paul, "Hard to be understood," which may be wrested to the destruction of the unlearned and unstable; but we give it as our "opinion," that in all cases, involving doubt, it cannot be of much importance to determine the precise meaning of the word, or the full import of a position.

In the Greek Testament, the word from which church is translated, and also the word from which foundation is rendered, are the feminine gender. Jesus said, "Thou art Petros–(rock)–Peter,

but upon this rock, (Petra) I will build my (ekkleesian) church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against (outees) it. Hence rock, church and it, are all feminine.

It would seem most probable, from the fact that, the Savior was discoursing in reference to the foundation, the rock, and only, incidentally, mentioned the church that, he intended to say, the gates of hell shall not overpower the foundation, on which the church was to be built. Yet, we would not, from our present standpoint, be disposed to engage in a discussion in regard to the specific reference of our Lord. The preservation of the church, is a living monumental argumeut in confirmation of the truth of what the Lord said, and no power of earth or Hades—the under world,—will overcome it.

KIND WORDS.

To Elder Jacob Creath, of Palmyra, Mo., we feel under lasting obligations, for his kindly suggestions in regard to our manner of conducting the Religious Historian. Our venerable brother, may rest assured that, any advice from him, will be most thankfully received. We have for more than forty years, considered Brother Creath, a very sound and able advocate of the cause of Christ. We trust, he will be spared to perform much more valuable service in the Lord's vineyard.

Brother J. T. Barclay—Wheeler Station, M. & C. R. R. Ala., has inspired us with heartfelt gratitude. for his very excellent suggestions, touching our labors. Bro. B. has a world-wide fame, as the writer of the best work upon the "Holy Land," and especially, with regard to Jerusalem as it was, and now is. Any thing from his pen, will be read with the deepest interest.

To no correspondent, do we feel more thankful, than to Bro. Thomas Holman, of New York city, for his persistant criticisms in regard to the Typography of the Religious Historian. Another so accurate a printer, and possessed of so good taste, in putting up work, we cannot name. We well remember that, Brother A. Campbell, told us in our youth that, one of the most serious embarrassments of his life, sprang from a want of associates able

and willing to criticise his speaking and writing. For some years, on account mainly of the endless difficulties in finding competent printers, we have hesitated to write for the press. We are thankful that, we have been so far able to have passable work done, better, possibly, than any other publication amongst us, except the Quarterly. Still, we look for marked improvement, and we trust the time is not far distant, when even Bro. Holman, will say, "well done."

Brother Nathan W. Smith, of Ringgold, Geo., still evinces great confidence in the Jerusalem plan of performing spiritual labor; but thinks some of his co-laborers whom he very earnestly loves, are a little inclined to experiment. We trust they will all return to the old paths soon, and we see no cause, why our brethren in Georgia, should not labor in the greatest harmony.

Brother Stephen Strickland, a venerable, and efficient laborer, at Georgetown, Texas, has our earnest thanks for his words of encouragement. We will do all that is in our power, to meet his expectations. A true narrative of the Christian Institution, as given in the New Testament, no man, has to this date, been able to give, in life colors; and we presume, our work will continue to evince imperfections. We however, promise, honest work, and if spared, we trust to quite essentially contribute to a better understanding of church relations, especially amongst the saved. Bro. Strickland, can scarcely imagine the earnestness of our gratitude to God, for the many good wishes, and no doubt, fervent prayers, of so many of our co laborers, in spiritual Israel.

But the time would fail us to tell of the good and great men in the Lord, who are really holding up our hands, in our feeble efforts to serve the cause of our Savior. We still ask advice, and should we write any thing of doubtful bearing, we would gladly listen to lessons of correction. Brethren, suffer us not to err from the truth. Should any of our positions, not fully accord with current views, we most earnestly request our friends, to examine carefully the Bible before filing objections.

FAVORABLE INDICATION.

If we are qualified to judge the tree by its fruit, we think there is no doubt that, most of our religious Journals, in the first issues of 1873, breathe a more earnest, vigorous and healthy tone than in any previous issue. We refer, especially, to the Quarterly, Standard, Review, Record and Times. We thank God, and take courage, brethren.